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The Shape of Things

COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE SEEMS TO us to offer the only hope of creating a big army that is at the same time a democratic army. We don't like it, but neither do we like a world largely dominated by fascist powers whose promises are only as good as the armies of their intended victims. We prefer the universal rigors of conscription to a volunteer army raised to wartime strength through ballyhoo and pressure, including white feathers for "slackers." But the Burke-Wadsworth bill is not the conscription bill we think should be passed. It ignores entirely the proposals—vague, to be sure, but suggestive—made by the President on June 18. It provides that the men drafted shall be subjected to strict military training for one year, with brief training periods in the ten years that follow. The President suggested something quite different. He wanted a system which would train young men, and young women as well, in a wide variety of activities related to the defense of the country. It would include training in industrial processes and agriculture, in nursing and home-defense work, as well as in strict military skills. It recognized the fact that in a modern army only one person out of eight can be a fighter. It assumed, too, that all young people should somehow be fitted into the common struggle to protect our country and its deepest interests. Where is that plan today?

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THE BURKE-WADSWORTH BILL HAS BEEN much improved in committee, but even as a straight military-draft bill it is weak at several points. We doubt, for one thing, the wisdom of registering the whole male population between the ages of eighteen and sixty-four, and calling for active service men drawn from the group between twenty-one and forty-five. It would be better to limit compulsory training to young people and make it a regular part of their preparation for citizenship. This is the age group which as a whole carries the lightest financial burdens and which can be most easily dispensed with by industry. We believe, too, that the bill should be even more specific in requiring the reemployment of drafted men after their period of service. The provision for exempting conscientious objectors is much more liberal than in the draft of 1917, but it should certainly be broadened to include political as well as religious objectors. Basically, however, we want a different sort of bill altogether, one devised with thought and imagination for the creation of a democratic army. We hope the ideas of the President will finally prevail.

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THE GENTLEMEN OF THE RIGHT WHO HAVE been talking in firm tones of the need for "discipline" if democracy is to save itself should—but probably won't—welcome the navy "speed-up" act rushed through Congress just before it recessed for the Republican National Convention. Under the terms of this act the President has power to commandeer and put under government operation "any manufacturing plant or facility" in the country which he considers essential to the national defense. The exercise of this power does not depend upon war but upon the national emergency declared by the President last September, and the mere threat should be helpful in invigorating certain manufacturers who place profits before patriotism. Some of our airplane manufacturers seem disinclined to build planes for the army or navy until Congress has repealed the 8 per cent limitation on their profits. Mr. Roosevelt's agreement to drop the profit limitation is not enough for them. Some of our steel and shipbuilding companies can also be dealt with more efficiently if a birch rod of this kind is available in the government's cupboard. A Ford, at the risk of losing that Hitler medal, might be forced under this act to make good his boast of 1,000 planes a day. It remains to be seen whether the act will be turned to these purposes or merely held in reserve for some occasion when a strike needs to be broken.

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AMERICAN FLIRTATION WITH APPEASEMENT of Japan seems to have ended. A Presidential order has been issued prohibiting the export of oil and scrap iron from this country without a license. Present indications are that the licensing power will be used to cut off oil shipments to the Axis via Spain and to end the suicidal

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practice by which we have been supplying a potential enemy in the Pacific with the sinews of war. Even before the order went through, the Maritime Commission had on several occasions forbidden the charter of vessels to take gasoline to Spain and to Japan. But just the same Japan received from us last year 65 per cent of its oil imports and more than 85 per cent of its iron and steel scrap. The President's order was the only proper sequel to our protest against Britain's action in shutting the Burma road, over which supplies had been flowing into China. It should also end the embarrassing contrast between our sympathy for China and our boom business with Japan in the very articles it needs to subdue the Chinese. Relevant, too, is the fact that the export of scrap iron cuts down our domestic supply of a basic raw material and adds to the prices American consumers must pay for all products in the manufacture of which steel plays a part, that is, virtually all products. The Japanese rightly take appeasement for weakness: Britain's action in closing the Burma road was followed by the secret arrest of British business men in Japan. An embargo on oil and scrap iron to Japan is language its militarists will understand.

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MORE AND MORE OF BRITAIN'S RESOURCES are being poured into its fight for life, and to support the effort taxation on rich and poor alike is being raised to heights far above those of the last war. Introducing the third budget within twelve months, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood, said that the war bill now averaged £57,000,000 weekly. This is not far short of £3,000,000,000 annually, or approaching 60 per cent of the estimated national income. And on top of this, large sums are required for civil expenditures and debt charges. As a result, even with the new levies now imposed, revenue will cover less than half the expenditures of the current year. The income tax, which in the last war reached a peak of 30 per cent, is now raised to 42½ per cent, and there is also to be an increase in the graduated surtax which applies to incomes exceeding £2,000. The Exchequer will now take 90 per cent of the excess of incomes over £20,000. But the small man is also hard hit, especially those who just come within tax limits, since whereas the rate on the first £165 of taxable income was formerly half the standard rate, or 18¾ per cent, it is now to be raised to 25 per cent. On the other hand, there is to be no reduction in personal allowances. This recognizes the fact that a minimum subsistence level must be maintained. The same principle applies to indirect taxation. There are to be new or increased levies on all luxuries and even on those essentials the consumption of which can normally be postponed. But absolute necessities are not affected. Thus Britain adapts its fiscal system to the exigencies of siege warfare. Amazingly little grumbling has been reported, and the general criticism of the British press seems to be, not that the burden is too heavy, but that the Chancellor has not been sufficiently exacting.

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THE VICHY GOVERNMENT IS DOING LITTLE to support Ambassador Bullitt's optimistic belief that it is not fascist. Certainly the arrest and threatened prosecution of MM. Daladier, Mandel, Delbos, and others on the charge that they forced French entry into the war is typical of the scapegoat hunting which has marked the advent of every fascist regime. Daladier and his colleagues have, indeed, made grievous errors, but the most deadly was their failure to deal strongly with the traitors of the right. This can hardly be the reason for which they are to be punished. However, the Vichy regime is clearly at a loss for positive measures of reconstruction, and not being able to offer the people bread, must try to satisfy them with purges. The development of policy hangs on German decisions, and Berlin is taking its time. Perhaps Hitler hopes to demoralize France further prior to taking over the whole country and splitting it into a number of protectorates. There are reports of a plan to include northern France with Belgium and Holland in a new Nazified Flemish state. Breton separatism—a weakly growth prior to the war—is also being encouraged. Perhaps the most significant news from France is the report that in the confusion following the armistice large quantities of arms disappeared. Realizing the use to which such arms might be put in the future, the government has ordered the death penalty for concealment, but many prudent Frenchmen are likely to keep their rifles safely hidden until opportunity arises for their use.

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ALL TOO FEEBLE IS THE RECOMMENDATION of a Senate interstate-commerce subcommittee that railroad holding companies be brought under federal regulation. Senators Wheeler and Truman, who signed the report embodying this anti-climactic proposal, base their view on the disastrous experience of the Missouri Pacific under the domination of the Alleghany Corporation, chief Van Sweringen holding company. But the story of Alleghany, like that of our other great railroad holding company, Pennroad, underscores the need for more drastic measures. Neither served any sound economic purpose. Both were set up to circumvent ICC supervision. The Morgans made money on the operations of Alleghany; Kuhn, Loeb, on those of Pennroad. The public lost heavily in both. The Transportation Act of 1920 was intended to end the practice of using a railroad as a means of speculating in the securities of other railroads. The New York, New Haven, and Hartford crash and the 1915 Missouri Pacific bankruptcy had shown how

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dangerous it was to convert a railroad into a jackpot for stock speculation. Railroad holding companies came into being as a means of getting around the Transportation Act and the anti-trust laws. The losses suffered by stockholders and the public have demonstrated anew that the only safe way to run a railroad is to confine its activities to transportation.

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GEORGE WASHINGTON HILL'S TONGUE MUST have been in his cheek when he sent a letter to the stockholders of his American Tobacco Company declaring that the real purpose of the new anti-trust attack on the tobacco companies was "to repudiate established economic principles and to promote economic theories wholly foreign to American principles of fair competition and individual enterprise." For he and the other executives of tobacco's "Big Four" have done their best to keep "American principles of fair competition" out of the business and have shown individual enterprise chiefly in discovering new means for making a dead letter of the 1911 Supreme Court decree "dissolving" the tobacco trust. The farmer selling the leaf and the consumer smoking the weed have both found themselves up against a combination powerful enough to dictate the terms of purchase and the terms of sale. Arnold is to be commended for his courage in obtaining criminal indictments under the Sherman Act against the eight major tobacco companies, their subsidiaries and officers. That he will be successful in restoring adequate competition in the business is dubious, but he is even now planning another Augean task, restoration of competition in oil. The Rockefeller oil trust was "dissolved" in 1911, along with the tobacco trust, and with equal inefficiency. The present monopoly depends on control of the pipe-lines, and Arnold is reported preparing to strike at this very point. We wish him luck.

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IN HAVANA SECRETARY OF STATE HULL HAS been trying to induce Latin American statesmen to scotch German fifth-column activity—particularly that of consular and diplomatic agents. Back in Washington Acting Secretary of State Welles has been considering whether or not to do anything about the case of Frederich Ried, the new German consul at New York. Mr. Ried took up his post in this country when Brazil expelled him for the very conduct against which Hull warned his fellow-delegates. Why Ried should have been accepted by the State Department in the first place and why Welles should have to ponder the matter now that the facts are known are mysteries for the solution of which we should not wait too patiently. German diplomatic staffs in this country as elsewhere are notoriously swollen and go about their business with Teutonic bluntness. A few weeks ago the German consul general at New Orleans, Edgard Freiherr Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim, told us to mend our ways or suffer trade discrimination at the hands of the New Germany. Now Mr. Ried boasts of the 1,000 Nazified schools he established in Brazil and of his intervention against the suppression of a pro-Nazi newspaper by the Vargas government. Consul General Spiegel, etc., escaped with a light slap on the wrist. If that is all that Welles has in mind for Mr. Ried, his boss has been wasting the government's time in Havana.

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TO ANTI-FASCISTS HUDDLED IN MARSEILLES the sailing of the American freighter McKeesport, in ballast, empty of passengers, and bound for the Statue of Liberty, must have seemed like the final cruelty in a sadistic world. Many of these people hold American visas, but the McKeesport could not take them. It would have been "illegal" for the democratic government of the United States to save these anti-fascists; their torture at the hands of the Nazis will also be "illegal." Meanwhile, on this side of the ocean a fine transatlantic passenger liner has just been launched. We dreamed the other night that the America on its maiden voyage crossed the Atlantic to rescue Europe's children. But that would be illegal too. Instead, it is going on a pleasure cruise to the West Indies.

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Havana—a Limited Victory

THE Havana conference, which as we write is entering its concluding stages, has squared up to some of the problems of hemisphere security with far more realism than was displayed at the meeting in Panama last fall. It has also provided a more convincing demonstration of pan-American solidarity than most observers had expected. For this achievement a great deal of the credit is due to Cordell Hull, whose perseverance, sincerity, and tact did much to allay ever-ready suspicion of "Yankee imperialism."

In a reverse sense we should also, perhaps, pay tribute to the Axis propagandists, whose vicious attempts to sow discord at Havana have done much to defeat their own ends. The delegates assembled only a few days after the Franco government, apparently inspired by its masters in Berlin and Rome, had broken off relations with Chile and launched an insulting attack on the government of that country. This impertinent interference in the affairs of a sovereign state aroused wide indignation and conjured up visions of assaults to come should the Axis gain a hold in Latin America. The lesson was rammed home by bombastic articles in the German and Italian press outlining fascist proposals for economic relations when victory was won and by the declaration of the Reich Minister of Economics that Germany would trade with the Americas on its own terms or not at all. With European fascism hardly bothering to conceal the mailed fist it has begun to stretch across the Atlantic, there seems a stronger inclination among the Latin American states to accept United States leadership. At Havana this proved disconcerting to the chief Argentine delegate, Dr. Leopoldo Melo, who arrived with the obvious intention of heading an opposition if one could be gathered. After a few days, during which he led the attack on Mr. Hull's draft proposals for securing European possessions in the Americas against a forced change of ownership, he found himself in a minority of one and capitulated at the price of a few minor amendments. The declaration of the conference on this subject is likely to prove its most important act. The preamble states that European developments may create a situation in American territory held by belligerents which might generate peril for the peace of the continent. Because of this prospect, it continues, the American republics may establish regions of "provisional administration" in non-American possessions which "are in danger of becoming the subject of barter of territory or change of sovereignty."

In order to carry out this policy, an executive committee made up of one representative each of the American republics is to be appointed, and in an emergency this committee may itself assume the administration of an attacked or menaced region. But should the necessity for immediate action make it impossible to wait for assembly of the committee, any of the republics, individually or jointly, "shall have the right to act in a manner required for its defense or the defense of the continent." This clause may prove a vital one, for it might well be invoked by the United States if the problem of the French Caribbean islands became a pressing one. In a recent article Major George Fielding Eliot pointed to the possibility that French North African bases were being lent to the Italians for attacks on Gibraltar. If this were proved, Britain might well feel justified in attempting to seize Martinique and the warships now harboring there. It may therefore be necessary for this country to take steps at a very early date to prevent the Caribbean from becoming a battleground.

Questions of economic defense occupied a good deal of time at the Havana conference, but the final resolution, as might have been expected, did little more than lay down directions for cooperation in solving inter-American economic problems, with special regard for the handling of surplus commodities. If Hitler wins the war and brings the vast consuming power of Europe under single control, a united front of American producers of basic foods and raw materials will be highly necessary. Such an organization would have an immense bargaining power, but it would have to recognize that it could not hope to withhold surplus commodities from Europe permanently. Its chief job would be to see that Europe paid a fair price—not in frozen credits or job lots of fountain pens. This would mean a hemisphere planning board with authority to decide what quantities and kinds of European goods could be easily absorbed. In trading on a totalitarian basis tariffs must give way to quotas.

The most vital method of economic defense would be the adoption of a carefully planned program for raising the standard of living throughout the Americas. The inter-American economic and financial consultative committee to be set up in Washington was directed to recommend methods for attaining this end. If average incomes among our southern neighbors could be raised even to WPA levels, the problem of commodity surpluses would be largely solved. A wise investment policy on the part of this country directed toward the development of potential Latin American resources is an essential step toward increasing purchasing power.

More than ever our own prosperity and security depend on the prosperity and security of our neighbors. They will react violently against attempts at exploitation and be angered if we adopt the attitude of a charity organization. We must strive, therefore, to construct plans for the economic development and integration of the continent which are clearly of mutual benefit, leaving to the Nazis the theory that trade is a kind of warfare.

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There Is No Alternative

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

ALMOST every sentence in Maxwell Stewart's attack on conscription in this issue of *The Nation* is, by itself, convincing. The trouble with his argument lies in its premises. He analyzes the proposal for universal military service today in terms of the draft army of 1917, and in those terms he opposes it—cogently. If our army is to be only the A. E. F. over again, its value is certainly to be questioned. But the very circumstances in which it is being created insure important differences.

The conscript army of 1917 was improvised after war had been declared. With surprising efficiency considering the pressure of events, but hastily none the less, two million men were selected, trained, and put under arms. The raising of this army was a temporary break in a normal national life in which military affairs were happily remote from the ordinary citizen. After the war armament expenditures were sharply reduced, the army was demobilized, and the United States washed its hands of the affairs of Europe.

Contrast the situation today: France disastrously defeated in the field and Hitler lord over continental Europe; Britain, with no unconquered allies except its colonies and the dominions, facing imminent assault. No one knows whether Britain wil be able to resist or will be overwhelmed with the loss of empire and fleet. But, at best, we cannot realistically hope for an early defeat of Hitler. Churchill's warning after Dunkerque that a successful withdrawal must not be confused with a victory applies to England's present situation. A successful resistance will also not be a victory. The political and military dominance of Nazi Germany, together with the spreading power of Japan in Asia—these are the controlling characteristics of the world of 1940. The creation of a strong army is not a temporary emergency measure; it is part of a long-range program necessitated by a world situation which is likely to grow worse.

A period of peace preceded the war of 1914. It was a period pricked with warnings for those who chose to see them; but few did. The world awoke to war with a start. The present war is different. It began—where? In the Rhineland or in Ethiopia? Or before that in the bare hills of Manchuria? It is not an event that can be pinned down with a date, but this much is sure: Hitler did not defeat France in forty days of invasion; he defeated France in the years that went before—years of deliberate, implacable preparation. Britain and France were at peace during those years, but Germany was at war. Britain and France approached the final showdown in much the same mood that characterized the years leading up to 1914—the same old diplomatic maneuvers, the conventional pre-World War military preparations. They believed that they were at peace until they found themselves fighting, but all the time they were in process of being conquered.

It is this error that the United States should avoid. As long as Nazi despotism rules Europe and threatens the world, so long must the word and hope of peace be banished from our minds. Even today the United States is no longer at peace. It is living in a state of war preparation which will last until fascism has been defeated. Hitler's successes and further ambitions have thrust upon us an unwelcome but inescapable job of total preparation. Out of nothing—speaking relatively—we must create a war machine, not as an emergency improvisation but as an integral part of our national life in the years to come.

Maxwell Stewart opposes conscription for two reasons. First, he contends, we need no large army; a two-ocean navy, an expanded air force, together with anti-aircraft defenses, and a well-equipped army of about 300,000 men are all that is required. For such an army conscription is unnecessary. Second, American experience with conscription in 1917 was not the sort to recommend the system today.

Even in his own terms Mr. Stewart is not wholly consistent. At the start of his essay he says, "Conscription in war time is regrettable but necessary." But why? If a small, well-equipped army were sufficient, conscription would never be necessary. On the other hand, if, as Mr. Stewart admits, a conscript army is required in case of war, it should most certainly be created before the actual fighting begins. That is the real lesson of 1917. For such an army must not be improvised. Its construction and equipping are a long job, especially today, when, as Mr. Stewart points out, the intricate machines of modern warfare demand a high proportion of technically trained soldiers.

It is quite true that the final size and disposition of the army cannot be determined exactly until we know the issue of the struggle over England. As long as the British fleet is intact, we have a two-ocean navy. If it is lost to Hitler, we have far less than a one-ocean navy. If it is lost, we must rush our preparations in order to be able to occupy by land and air forces any threatened area near our coasts or within striking distance of the Panama Canal. A two-ocean navy takes longer to build than even a modern army: during the next few years, years in which Hitler will be making his bid for world dominion, our newly authorized navy will still be under construction. Today we must act on the assumption that Britain may be defeated and that we may be faced with an early threat to the security of the hemisphere. It will be easier later on to limit our program, if fate permits, than to try, in the face of threat, to reach the level of totalitarian preparation in one desperate leap.

Mr. Stewart's second main argument against compulsory military service rests on two sets of facts—his ex-

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periences in the American army during the World War, and the reactionary influence of the conscript armies of Europe. With many of his points I agree. At a time when a reasonable chance existed of maintaining our independence and our democratic way of life without a big army, his insistence on the social dangers of militarism and on the deadening effect of army discipline would have bespoken a radical and militant attitude. Today that chance is gone. We have no choice between civilian virtues and military vices, between good and evil, between an army and no army. The choice lies between an army based on universal service and a greatly expanded professional army. That is the issue under debate in Washington this week. Admittedly a conscript army holds many potential dangers of reaction; admittedly, even in democratic nations, the armies are more reactionary than the general political level of the countries; at the same time the dangers of reactionary control in a volunteer professional army are even greater.

By and large, in every nation, the progressive groups in the community have shunned the army. This is due partly to a sensible objection to military life and military ideals, partly to the lack of professional inducements to take up an army career. The result is that a volunteer army is largely populated with able-bodied ne'er-do-wells and misfits, officered by reactionaries and bureaucrats. An army based on universal service will not be democratic *per se,* but it offers all the elements out of which a democratic institution can be built. To reject universal service out of fear of its potentially reactionary results would be to deliver the army to the reactionaries without a struggle. The very dangers to which Mr. Stewart points lead me to the opposite conclusion. An army is at best a favorable breeding-ground for reaction. We must fight for its democratization; and success in that fight is only possible if we have an army in which all elements of the population are represented.

American liberals should recognize before it is too late what the British working class and its leaders realized only after the war had started—that the left must take a positive position on the question of national defense. It must make the struggle against Hitler an honest fight for the faith it lives by. And it can do this in only one way—by working not against the army but for the army. It must help to create it and man it and then to control it—by democratic methods and for democratic ends.

Conscripting America

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

THE brutal logic of events during the past few weeks has swept away many illusions long cherished by those who call themselves liberals or progressives. Pacifism has become a luxury which we dare no longer enjoy; few of us who fought armament bills in the past have come out against the President's recent unprecedented defense program. The fate of France with its Popular Front reforms has even raised the question of how far we dare go in ameliorating working conditions when faced by potential enemies whose strength is based on a slave economy.

This revision of judgments has not been wholly free of hysteria. In the rush to secure our national defenses in the shortest possible time, we have taken action that would have seemed fantastic a year ago and that may seem equally so a year hence. Some of it has little relation to a rational defense plan. The gravest example of this mass hysteria, to my mind, is the general support which has been given to proposals for peace-time compulsory military service. Conscription in war time is regrettable but necessary; it also may be necessary for a country with hostile armies on its borders. But the dangers of conscription far outweigh its utility for a country possessing the peculiar defense advantages of the United States.

That these dangers have not been more clearly pointed out is probably due to the fact that they are largely intangible, and are recognizable chiefly to those who have had the misfortune to pass through a period of rigorous military service. My protest against conscription grows out of personal experience and observation in the last war; prior to my enlistment in the marine corps in 1918 I shared most of the popular misconceptions regarding the value of military training. (The training given to marines during the last war, however, was in every way superior to that given the conscript army.)

Theoretically, compulsory military service offers certain advantages. It is said to develop strong bodies, a valuable sense of discipline, self-reliance, and a worthy spirit of patriotism. There is a tendency to idealize it as a means of building citizens. On the first point there is little room for argument. Military training, like any other form of organized exercise, is beneficial physically. The more intensive the training, the greater, under most circumstances, are the physical benefits. Sloppy, half-hearted training which leaves the recruit with hours of time hanging on his hands may actually be detrimental physically. As to the other supposed gains, the effects of military service are the reverse of those claimed.

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Take, for example, the matter of discipline. No one will deny that intensive military training involves strict discipline. Discipline is indispensable for effective military operations. A certain type of discipline is also valuable in civil life. But American army discipline as enforced in the last war was a far better training for life under a dictatorship than in a democracy. It was anything but a conscious, self-imposed discipline. No effort was made to explain its purpose. Obedience was expected to be unquestioning. Every detail of the soldier's life, including much of his recreation, was controlled from above. Individual initiative of any type was distinctly not encouraged in the ranks. It was a prerogative of officers. Absolute discipline is of course necessary in war. But I maintain that the efficiency it creates is gained at the expense of those qualities of human personality most essential to a democracy. It is sheer hypocrisy to pretend, as do the military-minded, that discipline "builds men." Its purpose is to create not men but robots.

Nor does military training build self-reliance. A soldier may be accustomed to hardships, but he is not practiced in bearing responsibility. His food, clothing, shelter, and employment are provided by the government. As a result, civilian life with its uncertainties and lack of security becomes rather terrifying. I have known able young men who have reenlisted in the army year after year because they lacked confidence in their ability to cope with civilian problems. And I can testify from personal experience to the deadly, enervating effect of having all decisions made by superiors. It is particularly unfortunate that military training should usually come just at the period when boys are attempting to escape from the sheltered life of childhood and take their places in the world. For it definitely impedes, if it does not altogether block, that process.

Equally demoralizing for the developing personality is the dull routine of military life. Wholesome recreation is almost completely lacking. To be sure, there is a certain amount of supervised athletics, and some "uplift" recreation is provided by the Y. M. C. A. and the Salvation Army. But the average young soldier wants to get away from supervision and uplift in his free time. He wants, if possible, to use his scant leisure as he chooses. He would like, above all, the companionship of young women of his own kind. This is rarely possible. So, at best, the average soldier idles away his spare hours in desultory talk or in playing cards or shooting dice; at worst, he spends his time, at least before pay day is too far in the past, in bars or brothels. Often he can literally find nothing else to do. Good current books or magazines are rarely available. Nothing is provided to appeal to the intellectual or artistic interests of youth. The effect is particularly bad in the case of pampered youngsters who have never learned to stand on their own feet. And how many young men of eighteen to twenty-one are really fortified against the dull monotony of military life?

For years our jingoes have lauded military training as a means of developing a sound patriotism. Pacifists have opposed it on the ground that it tends to create a military mind-set, that it makes killers out of otherwise normal young men. Actually, it develops neither patriotism nor militarism, as millions of former service men can testify. The average soldier in the ranks comes to dislike or despise his officers, and soon his resentment is extended to the government which is responsible for the injustices and petty inconveniences of military life. Our conscript is not patriotic; he is cowed and submissive though inwardly seething with rebellion. This attitude may, as military men insist, make a good soldier. It does not make a good citizen.

I have reserved for the last what seems to me to be the most serious indictment of military training, especially in peace time, namely, that such training conduces to inefficiency and sloth. Nowhere in civil life would inefficiency be so generally tolerated, or rather encouraged, as it is in the army. This is quickly realized by the soldier in the ranks. Seeing inefficiency on all sides of him, he rapidly becomes cynical regarding his own duties. Finding that only suckers work, he shirks at every opportunity. This is distinctly not the attitude that I should like to see inculcated in American youth.

The inefficiency which characterized our war-time preparations in 1917-18 is sometimes blamed on the necessity for speed. It is pointed out that nearly five million men were trained, fed, and equipped within about eighteen months. Under such circumstances little attention could be given to standards of efficiency. Most of the officers were either uneducated army men from the ranks or inexperienced men drawn hastily from civil life. But I suspect that conditions would be even worse if an extensive program of military training were launched today. Control would rest in the same military caste as before, and my experience with this caste suggests that without the compulsion of war, morale would probably be lower than it was in 1918. Moreover, the peace-time conscript is not likely to take his job as seriously as the man seeking knowledge that may save his life. In the last war it was difficult to make the average soldier see the value of close-order drill. In peace time the traditional routine makes even less sense.

Some sober-minded persons who advocate universal military training in spite of its dangers give two arguments more weight than they deserve. One is that conscription is a means of getting rid of the military caste that has held the services in its grasp for many generations. Only a draft army, it is asserted, can be truly democratic, because it alone allows no distinction of class. The idea appears on the surface to make sense, but unfortunately it finds little support in the experience

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of the democratic countries of Europe which have had conscription. The Swiss army has frequently been held up as a model of democratic efficiency. Yet a recent study shows that even in Switzerland a highly disproportionate number of the officers come from well-to-do families with rightist political leanings. The same seems to have been true in France. In this country conscription would probably only place more power in the hands of the present military caste.

Even more persuasive is the argument that universal military training is necessary if we are to avoid the slaughter of untrained youths in the next war. This belief seems to me to be based on a misreading of history. Insufficient training was not responsible for American young men being sent to certain death during the last war. Few men were sent to the front without an adequate number of weeks of training. It was simply the wrong kind of training. Practically the entire period in camp in this country was given over to close-order drill and parades. Little or no attention was paid to maneuvers simulating actual combat conditions. Many a man was sent to France before he had ever handled a rifle, but this was not for lack of time but for lack of rifles.

The experiences of the last war, moreover, can scarcely be used to illuminate America's present defense problem. For under any conditions that can be foreseen today man-power is of relatively little importance. Experts are generally agreed that a rational defense program for the United States requires (1) a two-ocean navy, (2) an enlarged air force together with greatly improved anti-aircraft defenses, and (3) a small but highly mobile land force. A well-equipped, well-trained army of 300,000, with a National Guard of about the same size in reserve, could meet any conceivable defense demands. Such a force would have to be highly trained technically. The doughboy of the last war must give way to the technician, skilled in one specialized duty. This implies a professional army with a relatively long period of enlistment. Conscript armies may still have their place in the land fighting of Europe, but they are ill suited to the peculiar defense needs of this country.

In the light of these facts Senator Burke's plan for universal military service seems fantastic. His bill looks forward to the training of all men between the ages of eighteen and sixty-four, men between twenty-one and forty-five being subject to call for active service. To provide these tens of millions of men with even the most fragmentary training would place an enormous strain on our military equipment and personnel. And in modern warfare poor training is little better than none.

If war comes, conscription may become necessary as a means of mobilizing the entire force of the nation against the enemy—conscription of economic resources as well as of man-power. The nature of the training to be given will depend on the source of the attack. Presumably more attention would have to be paid to education in industrial techniques than to purely military training. Let us arm to the limit against Nazi aggression. But let us not think that we are safeguarding ourselves against attack by teaching our men and boys to do "squads right" and "squads left" under the totalitarian discipline of an army clique.

The War as Revolution

II. THE ATTITUDE OF THE INTELLECTUALS

BY MAX LERNER

ALMOST twenty-five years ago Randolph Bourne wrote an essay on The War and the Intellectuals which in the bareness of its logic and the cold passion of its words stands out from the mediocrity of the war writings. It was published in a little paper called the *Seven Arts* and summed up what was in Bourne's generation the best and most generous effort of the left. The intellectuals, Bourne said, were plumping for the war; they had been betrayed by the philosophy of pragmatism. But the true intellectuals could have no traffic with the war; the real choice was between the war and American promise. Bourne was ignored when he was not vilified. He died at the age of thirty-four before he could see the harvest of the dragon-teeth that the intellectuals, in their acceptance of the war and all its implications, had sown.

The role of Bourne and those whom he attacked in the last war is worth our study. Many have argued from it that since Bourne was proved right by what happened after 1933 his position must be the right one for 1940. Every generation of thinkers tends to act negatively in terms of its experience in some analogous situation within its memory. It carries over from its previous experience a sense of the mistakes it once made and wants to rectify them. What we forget now is that the intellectuals of the first World War were the Wilsonian generation of liberals who felt that they had finally come into power after the long, lean post-Civil War years. We think now

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of that Wilsonian generation as composed of idealists. Actually its thought was saturated in pragmatism. As Bourne pointed out, John Dewey and Herbert Croly and Charles Beard and Walter Lippmann were followers of the Wilsonian war policies because they felt that it was better to swim with the current and thus retain some influence than to remain frustrate outside the current. They sought—to shift the figure—to manipulate the great forces of history, to ride the whirlwind and command the storm. The whirlwind and storm were too much for Wilson and his brain trust. The Allies were unable to organize the peace, and America found itself implicated in their failure. The Wilson group had talked to the people in idealist terms but acted pragmatically. The result was a deflation of the pumped-up idealism which left the post-war generation with a sense only of how stale, flat, and unprofitable were all wars and all attempts to organize a peace.

I am interested in, but not much concerned with, the variety of attitudes which the survivors of that generation have taken toward the present war. Croly is dead. Lippmann writes for the New York *Herald Tribune;* Dewey is scarcely heard from; Beard is fiercely isolationist; the *New Republic,* most savagely attacked by Bourne, has sought for years to find atonement for its sins in the first World War by isolationism in the present one, and has been jolted out of its position only recently by the *Blitzkrieg;* Dos Passos has clung to his ironic sense of withdrawal; Hemingway fought fascism in Spain and is now reported to be finishing a novel in Cuba; Lewis Mumford and Waldo Frank, who stood with Bourne during the first war, have swung into the vanguard of interventionism today; MacLeish, who once admired Hemingway and Dos Passos, has swung with them. Yet it is not these movers and shakers, going off in divergent directions, who will count decisively in the American future. Many of them are still smarting under the intolerable humiliation of having once been taken in, and the attitude of our isolationists today is not so much a reasoned view as it is a licking of wounds. What will count is the generation now coming to maturity. Everything they have learned from the "lost generation," from the war novels and the historical post-mortems and the Nye committee reports, leads them to suspect the stakes, the purposes, the costs, and the consequences of intervention in another war.

I do not blame them. I cannot join in the present cry of my own generation against the cynicism of the college-age generation, both within and outside the colleges. I think that in a national crisis a disbelief in the basic premises of their culture on the part of young people is dangerous, but I can understand its sources. How can we expect them to be anything but cynical considering the mess we have made of the world we are handing on to them; considering that we have never given content, in terms of their lives, to the concepts of democracy, liberty, the career open to talent? Just as in the last war the carry-over of attitudes led the young generation to one form of mistake—the overcalculation of what they could do to control world forces—the carry-over of attitudes in our own time has led to the opposite mistake—a disbelief in all international action by America so deep as to add up to a suicidal inaction, a skepticism of values so intense as to add up to a form of nihilism.

I have spoken thus far as if there were a single strain among our intellectuals and that younger group which generally follows them. That is of course not true. There has probably never been a period in our history when a deeper cleavage existed between, let us say, college faculties and college students on a major issue of social policy. And this reflects a split among intellectuals in general which is especially serious on the left. In one camp are the "deadly-parallel" anti-interventionists, both of the middle and the younger generation. Without any particular party affiliation, they cling to a common desire not to be fooled again. With them are the Communists, who, until last August, acted as if a European war would find them cheering American entrance, but who now bask in the good fortune of having been swung by the course of events back to a line where they can once more quote John Reed's "This Is Not Our War." With them stand, ironically, the Communist-baiting Trotzkyists and Socialists, at least the majority groups among them. Since I am speaking only of intellectuals I omit the Coughlinite and Nazi elements in the anti-interventionist camp.

In the other camp, favoring intervention through war or measures short of war, are most of the non-Communist groups that were formerly for collective security, the left-wing New Dealers, including many who spoke with scorn of collective international action a few years ago, the intellectuals of every political persuasion who plead for intervention in moral terms because this is to them a war between two diametrically opposed conceptions of human destiny, and those independents on the left who believe that their only chance of continuing to work in the direction of a collectivist democracy lies in preventing a Hitlerized world. Again, since I am talking only of the intellectuals, I omit the pro-British industrial and financial groups and the hysterical patrioteers.

The Hitler revolution has found American intellectuals, as it found intellectuals elsewhere, unprepared to understand, to resist, or to transform it. In Germany and in every country which the Nazis have annexed, the republic of scholarship and letters was the first victim, and in every instance it became the satrapy of the conquerors. I am not prepared, however, to conclude that the ineffectiveness of intellectuals and the division among them betray a deep core of decadence in our culture. Our thinkers still exhibit, even in their disunity, a fierce-

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ness of belief which is the best mark of a continuing vitality. The fact is that almost the only resistance that Nazism has thus far encountered has come from the intellectuals and the workers. In Germany, in Austria and Czechoslovakia, in Spain and Norway and France, this resistance was undermined by capitalist sabotage, treason in high places, middle-class passivity and bewilderment. But the intellectuals themselves, who formed the heart of their country's culture, showed no decadence—only a heroism which may still be an earnest of vital cultures yet to come. The Spenglerian gloom with which so many of our thinkers have spoken of our decadence is something the enemy delights in. If we really believed it, there would be nothing, either for the intellectual or for the common man, left to fight for.

But the intellectuals cannot help to control the present or shape the future by clinging to the past. It is not their function today to exemplify those who cling to outworn economic, political, or administrative forms, even though they use such terms as "Western culture" or "the great tradition." Only to affirmations will our young people respond, and only if we seek to organize the future can we achieve or deserve their allegiance. Nor can the intellectuals be effective unless they move beyond the materialism which has up to now kept both the capitalists and the left arid, unless they recognize in men a desire for the heroic that cannot be summed up as a response to self-interest or even class interest, a desire to link themselves with the fate of something larger than the individual atom in a society.

Whatever the intellectuals may accomplish for our culture in the future, they cannot accomplish it by themselves. The "illusion of centrality" informs many of the recent calls to arms sounded by intellectuals. There is an underlying assumption that if our thinkers determine their share of the guilt in the victorious march of fascism they can then proceed to convert themselves and remedy everything. This assumption underlies the recent writings of Frank, Mumford, and MacLeish. But intellectuals cannot by themselves shape history. When they have become effective in the past, it has been because they have linked themselves with the rising energies of new classes and new élites. For while intellectuals must not follow the mass, they dare not alienate themselves from the mass. They must discover the healthy lines of direction in their culture and work with the people along those lines. Their objectives today must be socialism in economics, democracy in politics, planning in administration, humanism in culture. But to achieve these they must become again, as they were in Milton's day and Voltaire's and Jefferson's, organic parts of the life, the thinking, the striving of common people. If they fail here, they are lost. They are lost in the sense that they are reduced to an élite of the spirit competing for mastery with other élites which do not have their purposes or their scruples but which know how to make themselves a part of the life of the people.

There can be no doubt of the strength of the German élite or of the effectiveness of the administrative revolution it has accomplished. Our own élite has shown that it need not be deficient in this respect. "Brain trust" furnished a term of contempt which measured the fear that the business men felt about their effectiveness. Our intellectuals have already shown that they can move into the realm of government, master the techniques of law and engineering and production and administration, and compete even in these areas with the men of action. The French and British experience has now shown conclusively that the business élite as such is through, that it cannot be trusted to run a government for democratic purposes with any measure of success. In Britain it was the Baldwins and Chamberlains—the business men in government—who messed things up, and today England has turned to an aristocrat like Churchill and to labor intellectuals like Morrison, Bevin, Attlee, Laski, Cripps. It may be too late for Britain. But America has more time, and it need not be too late for us. The British did not discover until their backs were to the wall that there was a revolution going on in the world, that only a revolutionary reorganization of democracy could cope with it, and that the intellectuals on the left, with the labor forces, would have to be the vanguard of this reorganization. How long shall we wait before we make the same discovery?

The intellectuals cannot afford to wait until the discovery is made by others. They must understand that in a world in which things are moving very fast in some direction survival is for those who push things in a direction of their choosing. That means that they must rid themselves of the last residues of ivory-towerism. That is the real meaning and validity of Archibald MacLeish's recent *Nation* piece on The Irresponsibles, although MacLeish might have added that the intellectuals have been forced into an ivory-tower irresponsibility by every pressure within their social structure. We have moved far from the time when Julien Benda could get a wide response for his book "Le Trahison des Clercs" (in English "The Treason of the Intellectuals"). What Benda called treason was the abandonment by some intellectuals of the detachment of the medieval clerks or clergy and their mingling in the battles of the day. What we call treason now is not the political activity of intellectuals but their withdrawal from politics and the fact that they were not realistic-enough fighters.

It is upon the intellectuals and the common men that the real burden of the democratic struggle against minority power and social incompetence has in the past fallen. In this struggle they have together evolved an outlook on life which has been dangerous to the holders of economic power, but which has been the only con-

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tinuing guaranty of democratic survival. The partnership has been on the whole an uneasy one. The intellectuals have had a sort of olympian attitude toward the people, and the people have responded by an anti-intellectualism which has made them the prey of the demagogues of the right. But even this uneasy alliance has been given a rude jolt in the past quarter-century. The intellectual has gone on believing that he can enlist the support of the common man for their mutual interests on the plane of logic and reason. He has gone on believing that all he has to do is map out in his mind the outlines of the good society, and that the common man will then proceed through free thought and free suffrage to enact that society into reality. He has finally found, of course, that in thinking thus he has all along been living in a dream world. The common man discovered that he was not getting his *quid pro quo,* that the principles of civil liberty and intellectual freedom which meant so much in the realm of absolute values were in his world only so much rhetoric. His claims and expectations had been aroused by the promises implicit in the universals of liberal democracy, and now these claims were less and less being fulfilled. The gap between rhetoric and actuality was too monstrous to be tolerated. The sheath of rationality, thin enough at best in any group and at any time, was now worn completely through; and the way was opened for the irrationals which are always potential in political life.

No historian will ever write adequately of our epoch unless he sees clearly the dual chords of the irrational upon which the political adventurers of that epoch were able to play. A revolutionary situation brings to the fore first of all the active irrationalism of change and dislocation, of the drive to power, the release of resentments, the wreaking of vengeance. But once the new power structure has been created, a second and more passive set of irrationalisms comes to the fore—a desire to be ruled, to submit, to have done with the intolerable uncertainty of change, to yield, to adjust oneself to the inevitable. Much has been said of the capacity of Hitler and Goebbels to imbue the German people with the glow of their own fanaticism. Undoubtedly there has always been a group, whether storm troopers or parachutists, which has followed the Führer like a band of drugged assassins. But the more important hold that Hitler now has over the Germans and may still acquire over other peoples is his capacity to evoke their desire for submission and their weariness of struggle.

If the intellectuals of our time recognize what has happened in this psychic revolution, they will rid themselves of the myth of the reasoning man. They will understand that since ideas are weapons in social struggles, their own ideas cannot be merely chaste logical constructions but must be part of the deep emotional currents of their time. They must discard the fear they have thus far felt for the mass mind. They must understand that the kind of society they want will not be achieved unless, in company with the mass of ordinary people, they are willing to enter the struggle for state power.

Our business élite, I am convinced, now understands this. In every country it has held on to power as long as possible—in England up to the eleventh hour, in France to the very end. The tradition in America has been for the business élite to remain behind the scenes of state power, and the typical business-man politician was Mark Hanna, the President-maker. But Wendell Willkie, who is our 1940 edition of Mark Hanna, represents a desperate decision on the part of the business groups to make an open bid for administrative power. This open bid is being made with a shrewd knowledge of the people's desire for a new symbol around which to rally, with a shrewd knowledge of their desire for an efficiently administered nation no matter under whose auspices, and with some understanding that if the American people cannot be persuaded to fight under business leadership they may be persuaded under that leadership to yield to Hitler's *fait accompli.*

"War," wrote Bourne, "is the health of the state." It is perfectly true, of course, that in war time state powers are maximized, national cohesiveness is more easily achieved, and dissident opinion is stamped out. Yet for the intellectuals to argue from this that they can

"SO THIS IS ISOLATION"

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never have any traffic with war or with a state in war time is for them to abdicate effective leadership at the very crisis period, when leadership is most needed. Whatever may have been true in the past, it is true today that state power can build, crush, and rebuild the elements of the world. We must face the implication of this for intellectuals, whether we have war or whether we have peace.

We need not justify war or celebrate it in order to recognize the function it has played in history. War has always been a part of the revolutionary process, has always been a phase of rapid social change. War never solves any problems, but war often removes the obstacles which stand in the path of their solution. War can overcome the crystallized inertia of the past, as it has done in England, where the sort of social revolution that has now taken place would have been impossible except for England's peril. Social catastrophe of any sort may have a cleansing and unifying effect, and for intellectuals to shut their eyes to these facts is for them to shut their eyes to history and politics. We can no longer go on believing in the liberal notion of the unaided final triumph of the idea. Nor can we sit back passively and bask in the long historical perspective. In describing this war we cannot continue to use phrases like "a war between two imperialisms," which have lost every bit of real meaning they once had and whose effect is to pave the way for the only imperialism in the world that offers any great danger today—that of the Nazis. Nor can we indulge in the wishful fiction that if we let this war run its course and meanwhile preserve our chaste intellectuality, it will be followed by a real class war in which we can finally participate and which will lead to socialism. All the conditions out of which democratic socialism may yet emerge are in the world today. But if we are to bring it forth we must vie with Hitlerism in organizing the revolutionary forces of the world. Ultimately America will have to play its role in organizing the world of the future, and there is no nobler effort on which American intellectuals can choose to spend themselves.

We had better understand that there is a triple war going on in the world today; first, the military war which can be seen; second, a civil war in every country, much of which is unseen because much of it consists of secret efforts by the enemy to win over powerful groups in our culture and gain the victory without fighting for it; and, finally, the war within each person. This last is the most important war that is going on today—the war between the fascist and the democrat in every one of us. It is in this war that our intellectuals have a special task of leadership. But they cannot fulfil it unless they confront the realities of all three wars.

[*This is the second article of Mr. Lerner's series. The third and last will appear in an early issue.*]

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Defense and Taxes

ACCORDING to the financial press, the placing of arms contracts is being delayed by uncertainty about amortization allowances for tax purposes. Manufacturers who have been offered contracts which would necessitate an expansion in their capital equipment are hesitant because they fear that the flow of emergency orders will cease before they have been able to write off the additional investment. In this case, unless the plants were readily adaptable to peace-time production, their balance sheets would be burdened by unproductive assets, the amortization of which might swallow up all their profits on arms contracts.

The Administration has recognized that such firms have a genuine case for special treatment, and the Treasury is understood to be willing to recommend amendment to income-tax laws which would make possible the writing off in full of defense capital expenditures over a five-year period. However, it is anxious that this change should be accompanied by the enactment of an excess-profits tax. Naturally this suggestion is much less popular with government contractors, and they are proposing that the amortization amendment should be rushed through immediately so as not to hold up the defense program, leaving the controversial excess-profits tax to be fought over in Congress in a more leisurely way.

The two proposals, however, hang together, for rapid amortization removes much of the contractor's risk and thus lessens the justification for an unusually high rate of profits. Let us consider the case of a corporation which accepts an order for the construction of 5,000 tanks in five years. To carry out the order it must invest $5,000,000 for new buildings and machinery. That is equal to $1,000 per tank, and this sum will be included as an item of cost when the price is being calculated. Hence when the contract is completed, the corporation will have recovered the whole of its investment, and if the depreciation rules are revised, will have deducted this amount in annual instalments from its gross profits before arriving at its taxable income. This practically puts the government in the position of underwriting the capital commitment and reduces the risk to the possibility that part of the contract might be canceled without compensation. Moreover, if the additional plant retains any value, that is so much velvet for the corporation.

At the present time profits on naval and aircraft construction are limited to 8 per cent, or 7 per cent when a contract is negotiated instead of being placed by competitive bidding. It is expected, however, that this restriction of profit margins will be removed if and when an excess-profits tax applying to all industries is enacted. There should be little objection to this change, for there is no reason why the law should discriminate among the many industries working on defense contracts. And a general excess-profits tax is open to fewer technical objections than an attempt to limit profit margins on all government contracts. The latter course involves very complicated bookkeeping and raises constant difficulties over

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the position of sub-contractors. Moreover, it fails to take into account the profits indirectly created by huge government expenditures for industries not actually producing defense goods.

Accepting the principle of a general excess-profits tax, there remains the question of the most equitable and efficient method of assessing it. In Britain and Canada the tax is levied on profits exceeding the average of three pre-war years. But this may bear hard on companies of the "prince-or-pauper" type, and it necessitates special provision for new companies. During the World War our excess-profits tax was based on the "invested-capital" principle, but a good deal of litigation resulted owing to the difficulty of reaching agreement on the real capitalization of any given corporation. In practice this method would be favored by highly capitalized industries, such as steel, and disliked by those with a relatively quick turnover and large profits in relation to investment, such as aircraft. One suggestion being discussed is a combination of the "standard-profits" and "invested-capital" method, giving each taxable concern a choice of the one that suited it best. No doubt this solution would make an excess-profits levy more palatable to industry, but it would probably also mean a lower yield to the Treasury.

It is often forgotten that we already have an excess-profits tax operated in conjunction with the capital-stock tax. The latter, at present, stands at only $1 per $1,000, plus the new 10 per cent supertax, but it serves to fix a base for the excess-profits tax, which starts at 6 per cent on income in excess of 10 per cent of declared capital-stock value. There is a good deal to be said for revising these levies during the emergency period. It would be necessary both to lower the starting point and increase the rate. The recent La Follette amendment to the 1940 revenue bill, which was passed by the Senate but rejected in conference, allowed a specific exemption of $3,000 plus an amount equal to 8 per cent of the invested capital. Income in excess of these credits and not exceeding 20 per cent of invested capital was charged at 20 per cent; that in excess of 20 per cent of invested capital, at 40 per cent. These scales are much below those imposed by the 1918 levy, but the exemptions are the same. In view of the very low rate of interest obtainable at the present time, an 8 per cent exemption seems sufficiently generous and should not prove a discouragement to equity capital in the period of bonanza profits.

In a recent speech K. T. Keller of the Chrysler Corporation said: "Don't get down in the mouth about business in this country. There is going to be a lot of money spent here—more than any of us realize—and this money will get into circulation. Taxes may be higher, and in the long run this may cause some change in the buying of luxuries. But what we have ahead of us immediately is accelerated business." Corporation reports for the second quarter underline Mr. Keller's forecast by showing profits in many cases double and treble of those a year ago. To finance defense the government will have to draw on these profits either by borrowing or taxation. It will be far better for the economic health of this country, both now and after the passing of the emergency, if chief reliance is placed on the second alternative.

[*Mr. Hutchison will be on vacation in August but will resume this department on September 7.*]

In the Wind

A RANDOM HOUSE proofreader, working on the forthcoming volume "Stoics and Epicureans," found this sentence in Epictetus: "When men's minds harbor wrong opinions on things beyond the will . . . they are bound to pay regard to tyrants. . . . Would that it were only tyrants, and not chamberlains too."

WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT spoke of "the one man" who had refused to cooperate in the national defense program, several newspapers reported that he was referring to Alf Landon. They were wrong. He was referring to Henry Ford.

FEW NEWSPAPER REPORTS on the Democratic convention quoted the raucous Ohio delegate who facetiously nominated Bacom M. Timmons for the vice-presidency as saying: "The only thing wrong with Chicago is the *Tribune* and the Hearst papers." None noted the fact that the radio booth of *Tribune*-owned Station WGN, broadcasting from the convention hall, went dark as the delegate delivered himself of this conviction and remained that way until he was safely diverted to other channels.

THERE IS MORE than one source for the report that John L. Lewis's days as C. I. O. chief are numbered because of his anti-Roosevelt stand. He is expected to step down quietly rather than risk a real upheaval in the C. I. O.

THE AMERICAN LEGION of Wisconsin sponsored a week's schooling in "practical democracy" for boys of high-school age. At a meeting of the student body one of the boys introduced a resolution opposing compulsory military training. The State Commander of the Legion stepped in, said the resolution was "no part of the program," and had it withdrawn.

IN THE NORTHWEST, an observer reports, the G. O. P. ticket is McNary and Willkie rather than Willkie and McNary. Audiences tumultuously applaud the vice-presidential candidate, who has always supported publicly owned power projects, while the man who led the fight on TVA is received in stony silence.

ADOLF HITLER'S last big broadcast was substituted for a sponsored program on C. B. S. The program that gave place to the Führer was "The Rise of the Goldbergs."

ONE OF THE key defendants in the Christian Front trial that ended disastrously for the government was John F. Cassidy. After their acquittal most of the defendants resumed work for the Front; Cassidy is quietly planning to run for Congress from a Brooklyn district. Father Coughlin is preparing to return to the air in time for the campaign.

"I KNOW I am not going to be nominated for President. I have no ambition to be President." Wendell Willkie, quoted in *The Nation*, April 13, 1940.

[*The $5 prize for the best item submitted in July goes to the contributor of the note about the Legion published above.*]

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Henry Adams: An Unpublished Letter

THE letter which follows was purchased with a mass of papers, published and unpublished, written by or to Sir Henry Maine; it seems to me so characteristic of Henry Adams that I think it may be of interest to the readers of *The Nation.*

I suspect that Adams had no more than met Maine, perhaps at Monckton Milnes's breakfast table when he was his father's secretary at the American embassy in London during the Civil War; but he seems to have maintained a casual relationship with him until Maine's death. At the time this letter was written Adams was engaged upon those studies in primitive law of which his well-known contribution to "Essays in Anglo-Saxon Law" (1878) was the outcome. He was teaching at Harvard, though, as the letter makes clear, he had already begun to doubt his fitness for the vocation of teacher. Of his legal studies he has himself written in the "Education" that "at Harvard College, weary of spirit in the wastes of Anglo-Saxon law, he had occasionally given way to outbursts of derision at shedding his lifeblood for the sublime truths of Sac and Soc," and it is clear that he did not think the law provided much insight into the nature of the Middle Ages. Perhaps this explains why he turned, in the later seventies, to the study of American history. I imagine that the book Maine sent to him was the "Early History of Institutions" (1875)—possibly an advance copy, through Henry Holt, of the American edition. I do not know whether Adams fulfilled his promise—or threat—to review the book in the *North American* since the war prevents me from examining the files of that periodical.

The reference to Justice Holmes is, I think, of special interest. As is well known to scholars, Hensler's work, to which Adams refers, had considerable influence on the Justice, who was at this time engaged in the researches which resulted in "the Common Law." Holmes had already met Sir Henry Maine on two previous visits to England. Of the first meeting, which took place, I think, in 1867 or 1868, he himself told me. Sir Frederick Pollock, then a young Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, had taken him to Maine's to breakfast; they stayed until eleven, when their host suggested that they accompany him to see John Stuart Mill at Blackheath. Talk with Maine and Mill on one day was not, I suspect, an unattractive experience for a young man eager to establish himself in the world of scholars.

It is not unamusing that among the letters in this collection there is one from John Stuart Mill acknowledging the gift of the same book, expressing the hope that he may be able to review it, but fearing—like Adams—that no public exists likely to be interested in learned literature of this kind.

HAROLD J. LASKI

My dear Sir Henry: I was delighted to receive your book, not only for the book's sake, but to feel that you had not forgotten me. I have read it through with great interest and pleasure and shall write a notice of it for the April *North American.* Of course I shall attack it ferociously. There is a delightful want of responsibility in writing in this country on such subjects, a feeling that no one will read it, or care for what is said if they do; and this stimulates the writer to the most reckless tours de force by way of criticism. After writing more or less habitually for years, I have yet to learn that anyone has ever so much as seen any of my remarks, with the single exception of Freeman, who did once condescend to write a very droll letter of reply to some comments of mine on his essays. So I shall attack all your opinions on the principle that it is better to be thorough about it. As it amuses me, and won't hurt you, I suppose there can be no just ground of objection. I only wish I could ever do anything myself that was half as good.

The truth is, the more I study this subject, the less practical and positive are the results. I have again this year taken a class through your "Ancient Law," encouraging them to dispute, and overthrow if they could, every individual proposition in it. Then we read the "Germania" and are now halfway through the "Lex Salica," translating and commenting on every sentence. They have had to read your "Village Communities," McLennan's book, Nasse, and everything else they could lay their hands on, including much Roman law and other stuff. They are deep in theses on numerous abstruse points, and argue in the lecture room by the hour. But I regret to say that except as an intellectual exercise I cannot see that there is any great result. I believe they do learn a better method of investigation than they might in a simpler study, and I hope they will make better lawyers for the training, but they have not yet solved the riddles of archaic law. Nor have I, in spite of having read more dreadful German lawbooks than a Christian community ought to tolerate. By the way, have you seen Hensler's book on Seizin ("Die Gewere")? It is valuable.

My friend Wendell Holmes told me he had seen you in London, which I was delighted to hear, as he has long been one of your warmest admirers here. My own life is of the calmest kind. My wife and I jog on as peacefully in this remote corner of the Arctic Circle as though we had half a century behind us. We hope you will still pay us a visit one of these days. For a summer excursion, to one who can tolerate the sea, America is not altogether a bad resort.

My wife wishes to be remembered to you and Lady Maine. She is still at times a little homesick for London, but I doubt whether we shall ever get the energy to cross the ocean again, unless we become dyspeptic or otherwise imbecile enough to be driven by physicians. As Europe is the only pleasant remedy in the whole *Materia medica,* the doctors prescribe it for everything from a toothache to apoplexy.

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Thanks again for the book. I hope you find Holt a satisfactory publisher. He wrote me some months ago that you were a most satisfactory "client," and if he patronizes you as most of his class do with us poor scribblers, you must indeed feel an increased degree of pride.

Ever very truly yrs,

HENRY ADAMS

91 Marlborough Street, Boston, 22 Feb., 1875

Notes by the Way

OSBERT SITWELL went to China, he says in the introduction to "Escape with Me. An Oriental Sketch Book" (Harrison-Hilton, $3), largely to get away from Europe. But since, as he says at another point, he could not, even if he would, divest himself of Western ideas and of "the culture which, such of it as I possess, comes from the shores of the Mediterranean, and not from those of the China Seas," he took Europe with him. T. E. Lawrence said of Doughty that although he lived and dressed like the Arabs of the desert, "his seeing is altogether English." In the same sense Mr. Sitwell's seeing, the fiber and attitude of his mind, despite its special English and Sitwellian cast, is altogether European. What we get, therefore, is a constant confrontation of two cultures—which heightens the interest and the significance of both. We are transported not only to Angkor Vat and Peking by two superb evocations—they are not merely descriptions—but also to the country of the European mind. And the real escape is to a perspective on history and culture in which Hitler appears certainly as large as life but still only as one giant in a vast landscape that has been scourged before.

Mr. Sitwell, of course, did not set out to write his book with any such objective in mind. He was concerned with making his reader see, as he had seen, the dead wonder of Angkor Vat and the living-dying wonder of Peking. His approach is visual and sensual; he draws on history and archaeology only to reinforce a line or deepen a color in his canvas, as when he cites the artistic as well as historical fact that the massive towers of Angkor Vat were made possible by the trade in kingfishers' wings. In a similar way he uses, when he pleases, the antique accounts of Marco Polo; and at one point the witches' song from Macbeth makes startlingly vivid for us the swarming winged and crawling jungle life of Angkor Vat.

The chapters on Peking take up half the book, and it is the better half. Mr. Sitwell spent a considerable time there, and he is fitted by temperament and sensibility to understand and be captured by the character and daily life of a people who over thousands of years have learned to savor existence grain by grain. Here are solemn gentlemen airing their birds in cages, connoisseurs selecting a goldfish or a miniature flowering tree for points as an Englishman might select a dog or a horse; pigeon fanciers who tie whistles to the bodies of their birds in such a way that the rush of their flight produces a strange and menacing music. Here are festivals and fairs and the innumerable small rituals of Chinese life. He does not slight either, or gloss over, the poverty and decadence which haunt the streets. He gives us wonderful pictures of the Forbidden and Imperial Cities, fast falling

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into ruin, and of the countless temples to countless gods in a land of absolute tolerance—and of extraordinary capacity for adaptation and absorption. The Chinese character emerges from his pages complex, witty, lovable, indestructible. He asked a Chinese scholar what would happen in China. "At present," was the reply, "there are seventy million Japanese and four hundred million Chinese; [if the Japanese win] there will, instead, be four hundred and seventy million Japanese, of whom four hundred million will be Chinese. You see?" After reading Mr. Sitwell's chapters on Peking, of which one can only suggest the richness, we see.

There is very little, in this book, of the preciosity for which the Sitwells have popularly been noted. There is instead an accuracy and fitness of word and tone which is amazingly sustained, considering the temptations of Peking and Angkor Vat. And it is pure pleasure to read a writer who uses the word "transpire" correctly.

MARGARET MARSHALL

Biography of Weber

ENCHANTED WANDERER: THE LIFE OF C. M. VON WEBER. By Lucy and Richard Poate Stebbins. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.75.

MUSICAL biography is of all historical genres the most difficult. It has action to show, but the action requires technical knowledge to be appreciated; it can praise the triumphs of genius, but can neither quote nor describe them; it can interweave the inner life of the man with his outer work, but in so doing it always skirts the shoals of baseless sentiment.

The admirers of Weber's music have long been waiting for a life of the master which should do all that is required without falling into these attendant pitfalls, and the Stebbinses—mother and son—have gone a long way toward fulfilling the requirement. Their work is scholarly, sympathetic, and readable. They leave far behind not only Emil Ludwig's cock-and-bull essay but the summary judgments of Julius Kapp and the dry sketch by Spitta in Grove's dictionary. All these writers had, of course, a wonderful subject. Next to Berlioz and Wagner, Weber is the best-rounded musician of the past century. He may, indeed, be said to have shown the way to the other two in the multiple careers of composer, conductor, critic, organizer, journalist, and man of the world. After the passing of the eighteenth-century courtier—the household music-box which is fed a meal and regurgitates a tune—the independent self-promoter, often lacking the meal, was bound to come: Weber was the first. His life in Germany, France, and England during the revolutionary and Napoleonic period is a story of precarious struggle and undaunted genius. It is set off by the tyrannical animosities and amiable caprice of petty German sovereigns and their no less petty *Kapellmeister,* and it winds up in a touching climax with glory and death in London.

All this the authors of "Enchanted Wanderer" have told with great simplicity and a staggering fulness of knowledge. In their pages one can meet Mozart's Constance, who was Weber's first cousin; Abt Vogler, known to most through Browning's silly lines; the Meyerbeers, so unjustly treated by Wagner; Wagner's own stepfather—or father—Ludwig Geyer; the crazy Duke of Saxe-Gotha, grandfather to Victoria's Prince Consort, and hundreds of others of that caliber. The chapters bulge with the names of minor eminences about whom the ingenuity and patience of the authors leave no secret of genealogy or character. The whole is well coordinated into a lightly flowing narrative full of understanding and charm.

Unfortunately, there is not quite enough about music itself. Though the two biographers make it clear that they consider Weber a very great composer, more than a mere precursor of Wagner's, they never tell us in what precise ways "Der Freischütz," "Oberon," and "Euryanthe" are masterpieces. To be sure, they warn us on page one that "this is no treatise on Weber's music." But then they go too far in the direction of criticism not to whet our appetite for more; while at the same time they fail fully to remove the prejudices still current against Weber's work. In "The Heritage of Music," for example, a critic writes: "Weber may not have been a great composer, but he was without doubt a great opera composer. . . . In Weber's music there is little musical development. . . . Weber never produced a prize bloom or perfected a single species . . ." and more plausible imagery of the same sort. The Stebbins book does little or nothing to remove such confusions, and in fact by constant misleading references to romanticism, it adds the confusion of the historical background to the existing one of personal injustice. What I mean will appear from a typical quotation. Our authors are discussing the interesting question of Weber's susceptibility to scenery as a source of inspiration. They go on to say: "The grandest spectacles seldom equal the imagination of a romantic." We are never directly told what a romantic is, but six pages farther on we read: "Duke Emil Leopold August was either insane or the embodiment of the *n*th degree of early German romanticism—which indeed amounts to much the same thing." Quite apart from the illiterate use of "*n*th degree," this sentence would be pure slander if it were not simply the result of a blind spot in the writers' equipment—a slander not only of the fruitful German romantic school but of their own subject, Weber, who six pages earlier was patronizingly declared a romantic.

The chaos of terms extends to the very jacket of the book, where we are told that Weber was *no romantic composer* but a serious, hardworking musician. Apparently romantic

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composers do no serious work, and it is a mystery how posterity ever hears of them. In the 350 pages of this biography there are perhaps a hundred important references to romantic art, but not once do we get wholly clear of the absurd misuse of the word as a synonym for silly, sentimental, or insane. This reading back of our misconceptions into the past, where they did not exist, certainly vitiates an otherwise notable piece of work. That it does not render it valueless is due to the authors' obvious sincerity and fine scholarly instincts. But a stronger and a perverse instinct drives them on to relish and exaggerate what they take to be sentimental; else they would not have chosen, from all the names which their hard-working, serious musician was called, the title "Enchanted Wanderer."

JACQUES BARZUN

History of Surgery

THE STORY OF SURGERY. By Harvey Graham. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.75.

"SURGERY," writes the author of this book, "was born of a queer muddle of demonology, tribal ritual, and social necessity, but in the earliest civilizations it developed rapidly into a lusty infant art." He untangles this muddle in an interesting and credible way, tracing the various forward steps, side steps, and back steps of surgery from the earliest evidences to the most modern refinements. He gives an infinite variety of details, many of which are very interesting and some rather dull and off the subject, as, for example, his account of grave robbing and his diatribe against homeopathy. The style is marred to a slight extent by attempts at humor which usually fall flat.

In his discussion of primitive surgery the author displays considerable psychological insight, particularly in his recognition of the functions of the infliction and the endurance of pain in the therapeutic efficacy of surgery. This psychological insight seems to desert him in the discussion of more recent developments.

A far more serious defect of the book is its curiously insular nature, which becomes apparent chiefly in the latter half. A more provincial viewpoint can scarcely be imagined. To the author there have been no great modern surgeons in any country but England. Valentine Mott is not mentioned, nor Harvey Cushing, nor any of the three Mayos, nor any of the great Chicago and Baltimore surgeons. But America is not the only country slighted; none of the great French and German surgeons are mentioned either. Even the discussion of anaesthesia is heavily weighted in favor of Simpson's introduction of chloroform in November, 1847, which was five years after the value of ether was first demonstrated in this country.

It would be equally chauvinistic of the reviewer to dwell too heavily on this criticism. But it is strange that in these days, when nations are trying so hard to understand one another—or to misunderstand one another—a British man of science should write a history of surgery which flagrantly violates the fundamental dictum that science is international.

According to the publisher, Harvey Graham is the pseudonym of a prominent British physician.

KARL MENNINGER

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RECORDS

MY CRITICISM of the technical discussions of the music in recent Victor leaflets brought three letters of protest, all of which praised the leaflets for their information about the composer's life and period and the way these affected his music. I don't deny that such information, when it is correct, is valuable; but I do say that to experience the effect of the arrangement of colors, planes, masses, lines, directions that constitutes a Cézanne still-life, the impact of the force that it embodies, one does not need to know any facts about Cézanne's life and period and their relation to things one may observe in his way of painting; and I say this is true also of a Mozart symphony. And if I say that one can have the experience of the symphony without the knowledge of the cultural history, it is because the information in the leaflets—and not only in leaflets—being what it is, one does best to do without it.

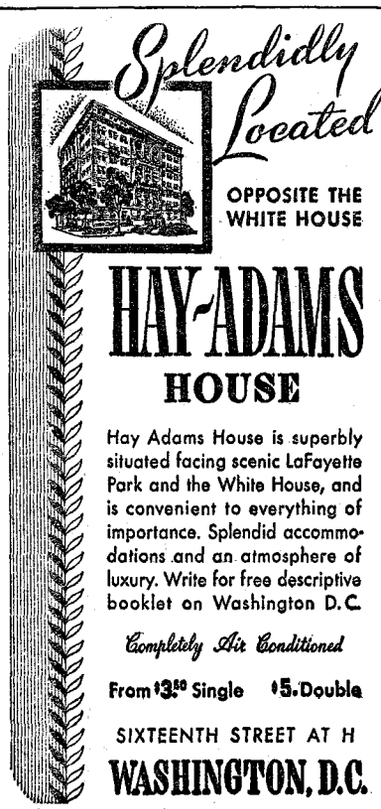
The Victor leaflets under discussion are slapped together from other writings—sometimes with quotation marks, sometimes without. To quote the effective statements of others at points in one's own line of thought is legitimate; but in these leaflets the slapping together is done for lack of any original thought, and sometimes without even a sense of direction in the slapping together. Thus, after a discussion of Berlioz's sensitiveness to literary stimuli we read: "The motives which led Berlioz to occupy himself so intensely with the composition of elaborate libretti for his instrumental works are still subject to speculation. It may be that 'Berlioz's failure to combine his many excitable impulses into an organic whole caused him to feel the need of a program which should explain the intention of his music.' ('Oxford History of Music,' Vol. VI.) It may indeed have served 'to disguise a lack of constructive power.' It is much more probable, however, that this is entirely too simple and convenient an explanation"—explanation, that is, of the programs by lack of constructive power; "and that whatever inadequacies we find in the Symphonie Fantastique have profounder roots than such an explanation would indicate"—explanation, now, of the music's structural weakness; and with this sudden change in direction we read further: "Einstein, perhaps, has come closer to the heart of the matter with the suggestion that the traditional symphonic form which Berlioz did not discard was basically at variance with the elaborate kind of program which he tried to put across. The new content might well have demanded a new form." Here are grand intellectual flourishes of pretensions to knowledge by a man who does not know from one clause to the next precisely what he is writing about. Such a man, assembling material from the writings of others, cannot tell good material from bad: preparing a leaflet about Berlioz's Fantastic Symphony he borrows from the "Oxford History," borrows from Einstein, but overlooks the one book that demolishes the legends which the others repeat—the book by Tom Wotton.

"I claim no more authority for my ideas," says Wotton, "than that which can be obtained from a close study of his works (both musical and literary) for very many years." That is a great deal of authority for ideas about music to have, and a great deal more than can be claimed for most such ideas, and for most ideas about Berlioz. For it is no less true today than it was when Ernest Newman pointed it out thirty or forty years ago that our notions of Berlioz's music are derived from no experience at all of what those who know him claim are his finest works—"The Trojans," "The Childhood of Christ," the songs—and only from occasional hearings of the three excerpts from "The Damnation of Faust," the "Roman Carnival" Overture, the Fantastic Symphony, the "Queen Mab" Scherzo, and one or two other excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet." But even these have been sufficient to confirm for me what Wotton says of Berlioz—that there was much extravagance in behavior and statement but little in his work, that "few composers have produced such fine effects with restricted means," and that "of all Berlioz's compositions, the Requiem alone really requires a huge orchestra and chorus in order to produce its proper effect"; and if I had heard nothing but the "Queen Mab" Scherzo I would know that Berlioz was an artist not only of the most astounding and fascinating originality but of the utmost precision, finesse, delicacy, and subtlety in his use of the orchestra.

Even, then, if Einstein's experience of Berlioz's music when he wrote his "Short History of Music" about twenty-five years ago was, as I suspect, pretty much the same as mine—for that matter, if he had heard nothing but the three excerpts from "The Damnation of Faust"—he had heard enough to know that Berlioz used an orchestra hardly distinguishable from Wagner's in "Die Meistersinger" and Debussy's in "Ibéria" and without the array of extra brass and woodwinds in Strauss's "Heldenleben"; that he used it in the Minuet of the Will o' the Wisps with admirable finesse; and that for the Ballet of the Sylphs he reduced it to five woodwinds, harps, kettledrums, and strings. Or if Einstein had heard all of "The Damnation of Faust" he had heard enough to know the quiet, subtle beauty of many of its pages. And if he wrote that "the full orchestra was his principal medium; only very occasionally did he handle smaller musical forces, preoccupied as he was with extreme and gigantic aims"—with the implication that the full orchestra was the medium only for extreme and gigantic aims; or that "he forged anew the poetry of 'Faust' and 'Romeo and Juliet' to his own ends, and monstrous works came forth, half oratorio, half symphony, half lyrical and half dramatic, all blazing with color," I conclude that Einstein wrote not of what he had heard in the music but of what he had heard about it, merely restating the old colorful legends in new colorful language. And the writer of the Victor leaflet merely restates them after him with additional trimmings—statements of Berlioz himself for which Wotton knows how to supply the context that gives them their correct meaning.

Hence, I repeat, listen to the music and do without the history.

B. H. HAGGIN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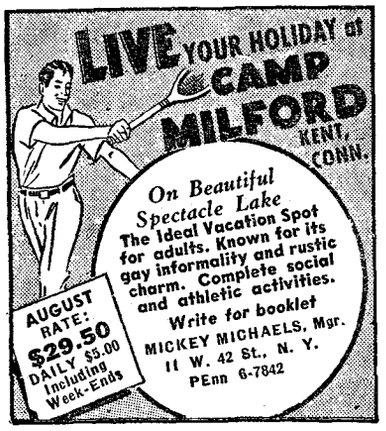
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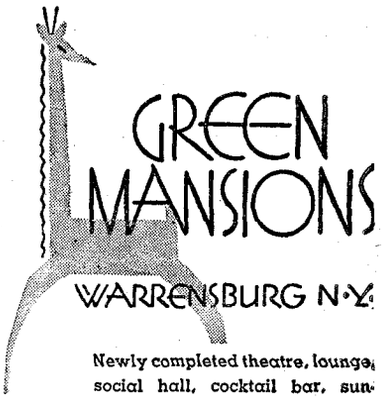

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Letters to the Editors

Conscription in a Democracy

Dear Sirs: I cannot see how you can support a program for non-military "vocational" conscription, and oppose a program for straight military conscription. (See *The Nation* for July 13.) Certainly, it is the former program rather than the latter which smacks of fascism. There is no valid reason why our youth should be conscripted into labor camps for vocational training. On the other hand, there are good reasons why a democracy should insist on universal liability for military service and training.

I should like to add that you could perform a great service to the country if you would tie up support for compulsory military training with the following program:

1. Conscription of wealth and industry as well as man-power in the interest of national defense.
2. Higher pay and greater promotional opportunities in the armed forces.
3. Intelligent criticism of current military technique in the light of the realities of modern mechanized warfare.

MAX SCHNITZER

Brooklyn, July 23

Robert Dell

Dear Sirs: I was deeply touched by the loss of our friend Robert Dell. Just now, when nations are overawed by successful dictators who change their "principles" according to the exigencies of their struggle for power, the passing away of Robert Dell means more than the loss of an able journalist. He was one of those few Europeans who never bent their backs to politicians in power. Thereby he set an example of character which in spite of the new serfdom will be of lasting importance in all efforts for a higher organization of human society. RUSTEM VAMBERY

Richmond, Va., July 21

Bronx Houseworkers

Dear Sirs: You must have been extremely credulous to have accepted Carl Offord's article on Bronx slave markets (printed in your issue of June 29) as a true picture of the relationship between Bronx housewives and colored workers. The victims of your so-called "slave-markets" are not 1/10 of 1 per cent of the total number of houseworkers employed in Bronx homes on an hour, day, or full-time basis. Most of these girls and women are obtained through reliable agencies, and they demand, and receive, an average of 35 to 40 cents an hour, plus carfare and meals. Very few of us, indeed, would risk the health and safety of our families by hiring workers from the street corners of the Bronx—without references or other qualifications.

I do not assume that wage and hour standards in domestic service are completely satisfactory—surely there is much that can be remedied. However, this is not a Jewish problem, as your article so viciously suggested.

DAVID LEVINE

New York, July 24

[This is one of a number of letters we have received in protest against Mr. Offord's article. We have every reason to believe that nothing was farther from the author's mind than any wish to stir up anti-Semitism. It seems to us that if anyone is guilty of that offense it is those who engage in the activities Mr. Offord described. He explains below his purpose in writing the article. —EDITORS THE NATION.]

Dear Sirs: Slave Markets in the Bronx was not an anti-Semitic tract; its emphasis was on the plight of Negro workers in Harlem, mirrored in the slave markets. To allow the actions of those Jewish women who resort to the practices discussed in my article to reflect on the Jewish people as a whole would be as despicable and as harmful as to denounce the entire German people as Nazis or to smear all Protestants with the mark of the Ku Klux Klan. The Bronx slave market is an expression of the familiar conflict between the worker who tries to get as high a wage as possible and the employer who wants to pay as little as possible. It is an unusually sordid, even tragic, demonstration of the struggle because both employer and employee enjoy such a relatively slight degree of economic security and because both suffer open or covert racial discrimination.

It was owing to my intense interest in advancing the unity of our people that I pointed out that the actions of the Bronx housewives in some measure facilitate the spread of anti-Semitism in Harlem.

A consistent struggle against anti-Semitism is being waged by the National Negro Congress and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in cooperation with Jewish leaders. I am but one of a great number of Negroes who believe that "unity" is the people's strongest weapon in fighting the development of fascism —which invariably advances under a barrage of anti-Semitism. Slave markets in the Bronx are definitely a contributing factor to disunity, and the sooner all Jews, Gentiles, and Negroes who cherish a hope for peaceful interracial relations decide to do something about it the better for our political health.

The Committee on Street Markets headed by Cara Cook, 247 Lexington Avenue, New York, has compiled an extensive report on slave markets in New York, with an excellently detailed program for correcting the existing evils. I understand that this report is now being considered by the Labor Department. CARL OFFORD

New York, July 25

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